

Farm Operation – Soil Management

Soil is the capital reserve of every farm.



1. Good soil management ensures long-term fertility of soil, and boosts farm yield and income.

2. Protecting soil from erosion due to wind, water and tillage is the first step toward sustainable agriculture. Application of mulches, crop residues, cover crops, crop rotation and minimized mechanical movement in field serve this purpose well. Plant a shelterbelt or windbreak where necessary.

3. Building and maintaining organic matter level in soil is important for reducing soil erosion, improving soil structure and enhancing soil fertility. This can be achieved by applying compost or other organic materials, planting cover crops and/or green manure crops, leaving crop residues in field and adopting crop rotation.



About “GAP- CROP”

The GAP-CROP provides guidelines on local sustainable production of safe, healthy vegetables and fruits. It focuses on reducing the risk of chemical contamination (e.g. by pesticide and heavy metal) at farm level. This article is the fourth of a series of 12 Codes of Practice (COP) making up the GAP-CROP. Farmers may voluntarily follow this COP, identify potential problems in their farms, take appropriate control/mitigation measures, and monitor the effectiveness of such measures.





4. Soil quality (pH, salinity, organic matter, nutrient level, etc.) should be checked and tested regularly.

5. Soil pH is the most important factor governing availability of nutrients in soil. The pH range of 6 to 7 is the optimum for availability of most nutrients. Acid soil can be corrected by liming, whereas alkaline soil can be corrected by sulphur.

6. Saline soil can be rectified by leaching soil, scraping off surface soil and reducing use of agro-chemicals that cause salt build-up.



Next COP:
Farm Operation –
Use of Fertilizers

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